

## **I'm So Glad You're Here** by **Movie Riggs**

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**Summary:** Sequel to 'Where Do I Know You From' Mike returns home to his roommate after a long day at the internship. One-shot.

## I'm So Glad You're Here

So it's not that my recent one-shot was as big as 'Stranger Things: Aftermath' or anything, but those of you who did like it seemed to *really* like it. I thought I'd give you all a treat and write a short followup. I don't want to turn this into a new multi-chapter story or anything, as once I finish 'Aftermath' I've already got other projects in the works. Even so, I don't see any harm in making another thousand-word look into this barely-explored AU that I created.

**Note to newcomers:** If you haven't already read 'Where Do I Know You From?' you won't really get the context of this story. I'd suggest going back and giving that a once over before you proceed any further down this page.

**Note to not-newcomers:** If you have already read 'Where Do I Know You From?' then you know that story takes place in an alternate reality in which Season 2 is ignored (it hurts to write that, believe me) and Mike and Eleven reunite after about ten to twelve years of being apart since that fateful week in 1983. This sequel you are about to read takes place a couple weeks to a couple months after its predecessor.

**Hope everyone enjoys! Riggs out.**

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Mike Wheeler was late again, but this time it was *not* his fault. The old codger of a janitor who patrolled his building's halls after hours had forgotten to set the clock back. Mike thought up colorful curses that he wished he could cast upon the janitor and upon the man who invented daylight savings time in the first place as he packed his things. The corners of various papers and manila folders hung recklessly over the edge of his black leather briefcase, which he shut without care. The minute hand on the clock continued to tick by unforgivingly, while the hour hand reminded him that he was running more late than his inner workings thought he was.

Even Dr. Owens was gone. Mike noted the empty office of the man he was interning for as he hurried down the hall in an awkward

intermediate between fast-walking and sprinting.

Just in case an inkling of hope that the old-fashioned clock in the office wasn't wrong still existed in Mike, the outside world made sure to tell him again that yes, it was 8:15 p.m., not 7:15. A sliver of white hung low in the sky, greeting the night shift employees as the last of the day fizzled out, orange giving way to indigo. Mike ignored the parking ticket slipped under his windshield wipers and focused only on fighting the Chicago evening's traffic.

He lived on the third floor of a semi-nice apartment complex. Three stories was an unhappy medium between actually having a pleasing view of the urban streets and being close enough to the ground to hear every honk of every car horn from multiple streets away. The apartment was not particularly expensive, though Mike would still have had a difficult time affording it were it not for his dad's gracious donation. Ted Wheeler might not have been a great father in many respects, but at least the man was always willing to give up a couple dollars for his kids and their endeavors. Anything to keep them out of the house.

Mike liked to dream of the day he would upgrade from the status of intern to employee. The job position he was preparing for promised a hell of a nice salary for a kid just barely out of college. At the very least, he would be able to afford his own house, away from the hustle and bustle of the God-forsaken block he resided on now. He could afford to do just what his dad had done—only better, he told himself—buy a better car, buy a house, buy real food for all three of his daily meals. Maybe even provide for a family. A wife. But that was a conversation for a different day.

Mike must have jumbled with the keys and his briefcase for seconds upon seconds before the door opened by itself with a rusty click. He kicked the door the rest of the way open and scrambled for the kitchen table, just managing to keep his things from scattering across the floor. Recollecting himself, Mike walked back to the door, shutting and locking it.

Finally feeling like he could take a breath, Mike's senses were overcome by the odor of a cigarette. The smokiness clung to the air, masking whatever hint of flavor might have been left in the cold

dinner sitting out on the dining table. He wasn't that hungry anyway. Removing his shoes and jacket in record time, Mike made his way to the bathroom. The sound of water running told him he was welcome to come in.

The steam from the shower mixed with the smoke of the cigarette that was left burning on the apartment's only ashtray (which was moved from room to room depending on when his roommate felt like relieving stress). Mike turned on the bathroom fan in the hopes of clearing the air out a little.

"You're late," the voice of the shower's occupant told him sternly. Mike leaned over the sink, splashing a bit of water in his face to wake himself up out of the humdrum of the day's activities. "I know. I'm sorry. It won't happen again. Promise." The shower was turned off, and a pale, thin arm covered in droplets reached out at him. "Towel?"

Mike retrieved the requested item, which allowed him to come face-to-face with the deep brown eyes of the young woman. Those beautiful chocolate eyes assured him she was not mad (she rarely was). It was only in Eleven's nature to point out his tardiness. The concept of time was one of the first things he had tried to teach her, after all.

He kissed her before she was even fully wrapped in the towel, running his hands through her damp curls and pressing his body close to hers, careless as to how wet his suit might get. Eleven replied by throwing her arms around his neck and leaning into him till she was virtually lifting herself off her feet. Her mouth was still warm from the cigarette. Mike blamed the man who had raised her throughout the majority of her adolescence for Eleven's habit. He knew she only did it because he had. Then again, Mike had to admit to himself that he was nearing an addiction to the secondhand smoke himself, because it had come to remind him so much of moments like these. Bodies flush together, tongues in one another's mouths...things he could not possibly have dreamed of doing when he first met her.

They only broke apart when it became necessary to breathe normally again. Mike sucked in air and then leaned in once more, but Eleven turned her face away. Mike let out a playful groan in protest. Unable to hide her fond smile, Eleven simply undid the first button on his

white collared shirt and gestured toward the shower.

"Your turn first. I'll be outside." "Okay."

If Mike had to guess, he would say it was around two a.m. when he heard the howl. It jerked him from his spot on the bed and screeched a second time, faceless and murderous. All Mike knew was that the creature would have to make good on its threats to kill him if it planned on taking Eleven away from him again...

Mike awoke with just enough of a start to cause Eleven to stir. They had fallen asleep like they always did; facing one another, cradled in each other's arms without bothering to worry about waking up numb. Unable to help himself, Mike stole a glance over his shoulder. As he suspected, no monster-from-an-alternate-dimension was present in the bedroom. Eleven's eyes blinked once, twice, and then she was completely awake, looking at him with concern.

"Mike?"

She had expanded her vocabulary to the limit of an average human's years ago, but sometimes Eleven still managed to speak the most with less words. Mike moved his right hand from her waist to her cheek, both to calm his heart rate and to put her worries to ease. "I'm so glad you're here," he whispered softly. Eleven took the hand that cupped her cheek in her own, kissing the palm, the thumb, the wrist, and the back all in turn.

"Me too."

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**Disclaimer: I do not own the rights to Stranger Things.**